

**East Carolina University  
School of Theatre and Dance**

**BA Theatre Arts  
BFA Theatre Arts Education  
BFA Theatre Arts,  
Musical Theatre  
Professional Actor Training  
Theatre for Youth  
Student Handbook**

**2021-2022**

*We acknowledge the Tuscarora people, who are the traditional custodians of the land on which we work and live, and recognize their continuing connection to the land, water, and air that Greenville consumes. We pay respect to eight recognized tribes; Coharie, Eastern Band of Cherokee, Haliwa-Saponi, Lumbee, Meherrin, Occaneechi Band of Saponi, Sappony, and Waccamaw-Siouan, all Nations, and their elders past, present, and emerging.*

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## **SCHOOL OF THEATRE AND DANCE MISSION PREAMBLE**

The School of Theatre and Dance is dedicated to providing undergraduate students with superior, professional training in theatre and dance. In our rigorous, conservatory-style training within a liberal-arts setting, students are taught and mentored by a diverse faculty of active professionals who work to prepare them intellectually, artistically, and practically to be leaders in their chosen profession.

## **SCHOOL OF THEATRE AND DANCE CORE VALUES**

### **Excellence**

We strive to maintain a high standard of excellence in our classrooms, rehearsal halls and stage productions, celebrating the individual strengths, talents and dreams of our students while providing professional quality productions to Eastern North Carolina.

### **Professionalism**

Through a nurturing yet demanding work environment, centered on adhering to performance industry standards, we seek to create graduates who are competitive in their chosen field and also fully prepared to transfer their skills to related fields.

### **Diversity**

We believe our student body, faculty, staff and the stories we tell, must reflect the vast diversity of our community and our world. We give students the knowledge, skills and values to succeed in a global, multicultural society.

### **Artistic Risk**

The essence of making art is to take risks. We ask our students to challenge themselves and allow them the space to make both their successes and failures spectacular. We believe this is how new and innovative forms of creative expression are made.

### **Community**

We recognize and value the impact artists and arts education can have on a community. We encourage our students to be artists, as well as fully engaged citizens, who understand the responsibility and eagerly accept the opportunity to make an impact in their field, our community, and the global community.

## **EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION ACTION PLAN**

As members of the SoTD Diversity and Inclusion Action Committee, we would like to share our plan for action as we move forward to prioritize systemic change regarding an anti-racist dance and theatre community. Our artforms, experiences, community, and humanity advance when we include a wide variety of diverse perspectives, talents, and people. We are all enriched when everyone has a seat at the table, a voice in the conversation, and feels free to bring their authentic selves to the work. We commit to identifying and dismantling systemic racism in our school and our industry. This includes endeavoring to create a safe, accepting, and equitable teaching and learning environment and a programmatic series that expands the visibility of underrepresented choreographers, playwrights, directors, educators, performers, and design and production offerings. We would like to apologize for and acknowledge any racist and supremacist attitudes our SoTD community has experienced during their time at ECU and commit to changing for the future.

### **Action Plan:**

- **Provide staff and faculty with anti-racist and diversity training:** SoTD staff and faculty will be provided with and encouraged to participate in general and discipline specific anti-racist and diversity training in order to face personal bias and unacknowledged privilege with the goal toward creating a more inclusive environment for all students, staff and faculty.
- **Commit to creating a more diverse faculty:** In hiring and promotion, SoTD will advertise and seek diverse candidate pools for full-time positions. As SoTD builds a more diverse faculty, guest artists will be prioritized to supplement the offerings of the current faculty, so the curriculum and performance experience is more inclusive. Additionally, the search committees and promotion and tenure committees will be responsible for recruiting, mentoring, honoring, and promoting diverse faculty members to ensure that underrepresented faculty can attain and remain in positions of authority.
- **Amplify underrepresented voices:** This includes developing opportunities and experiences to elevate and amplify the voices of BIPOC leaders within the theatre and dance communities and create additional access to those networks for our students. This includes conscientious casting that avoids tokenism and stereotyping.
- **Prioritize curricular changes:** We, as the School of Theatre and Dance, value anti-racist and anti-discriminatory pedagogy and aim to encourage our instructors to diversify and decolonize our curricular and programmatic offerings by placing less of a priority on the Western canon as the foundation of theatre and dance. This includes evaluating syllabi and examining the curriculum with a lens that amplifies underrepresented voices.

· **Improve student recruitment and marketing efforts:** Make the audition experience more inclusive for underrepresented populations. The SoTD Recruitment Committee will work to develop a free on-line learning series and provide resources to help prospective and current students prepare for auditions and interviews. These sessions will focus primarily on underrepresented groups from high schools that lack sufficient instruction in theatre or dance. These training videos will assist students with access and preparation to be successful in the audition process. We will also work to remove economic barriers for inclusion.

· **Develop a Student Diversity and Inclusion Action Committee:** The charge of this committee is to address the inequities that exist within SoTD and craft an action plan in conjunction with the Faculty Diversity and Inclusion Action Committee to create a more inclusive experience for underrepresented students within the program. This will include procedures for students to express ideas, concerns, and suggestions for handling issues when they arise in a consistent manner. The student committee will be available to the students of the SoTD so that all voices can be heard and positive changes can be implemented.

· **Alumni Outreach:** We will engage with alumni who are willing to share their experiences. We will also collaborate with them on ideas for acknowledging and addressing these past occurrences and for creating positive changes to our SoTD culture.

It is with humility and professional care that we move forward into the next phase of the School of Theatre and Dance. This will serve as a living document with the intention that changes may be made over time to improve access to diverse perspectives in the content that we present to wider audiences and within our classes. This includes equitable hiring, casting, and auditioning and continually working toward a more inclusive environment, particularly for those in the global majority.

## **ABOUT THE BFA AND BA THEATRE ARTS CONCENTRATIONS**

Our theatre students work together in a challenging yet supportive environment, building their skills as performing artists and educators under the guidance of a diverse, professional faculty.

Our conservatory-style training programs are part of the ECU School of Theatre and Dance, and students are able to pursue a BFA in Theatre Arts with a concentration in Musical Theatre, Professional Actor Training or Theatre for Youth, a BFA in Theatre Education, or a BA in Theatre Arts. All concentrations have rigorous requirements and prepare students through intensive technique training, multiple performance opportunities, and challenging classes in the creative process alongside comprehensive coursework in theatre history, technical theatre, and professional industry preparation. Performance training gets put into practice on the ECU/Loessin Playhouse mainstage and with ECU Storybook Theatre. Study abroad opportunities are available to all students to enhance their curricular experience.

The small size of our department means that students are able to work closely with faculty mentors as they develop their skills and interests in their chosen concentration. One-on-one attention and frequent performance opportunities enable our students to flourish while the resources of ECU's large campus allow students to engage their other academic interests in a broader community. Upon graduation, students are prepared to pursue professional careers in the performing arts industry and/or field of education.

For all information related to the School of Theatre and Dance, please visit the SOTD website: <https://theatredance.ecu.edu/>

## ADMISSION

### Entrance Auditions

<https://theatredance.ecu.edu/academic-program-entry/>

Admission to the BFA Theatre Arts concentrations are by audition only. An on-campus audition is held each February for admission the following fall semester. Prospective students will complete an online application that includes any pre-screening materials required by the individual concentration to reserve a spot at the audition. Prospective students must also apply and be admitted to East Carolina University. Theatre Education students must also interview and submit a writing sample in addition to the audition process, and/or submit a portfolio of their work.

Students who are unable to attend the in-person audition may request to audition by video and will be directed to add additional videos to their online application. Preference is given, however, to those who attend the in-person auditions.

BA students are not required to audition but are accepted to the degree program upon academic merit.

### Scholarships

A limited amount of scholarship funding is available through the School of Theatre and Dance. Incoming students are automatically entered into the scholarship pool for the School of Theatre and Dance, and current students, including past scholarship recipients, should complete a scholarship application by the announced deadline each year through ECUAWard, ECU's online scholarship application portal. All students are encouraged to apply for SOTD scholarships.

<http://www.ecu.edu/cs-acad/universityscholarships/ECUAWard-Instructional-Materials.cfm>

Criteria used for determining scholarship recipients include: artistic merit, academic achievement, demonstrated effort and engagement in classes and rehearsals, and service and leadership within their program. Scholarship recipients will be expected to participate fully in school-wide events and committed to any additional responsibilities in service to the school.

### Program Commitment

Due to the rigorous schedule and high expectations within all BFA and BA Theatre Arts concentrations, students may not participate in outside activities that could cause significant scheduling conflicts. Employment (including summer employment), second majors, or other extracurricular activities are not expressly prohibited; however, all students are expected to prioritize their major concentration classes and mainstage productions (ECU/Loessin Playhouse and ECU Storybook Theatre).

Conflicts with any mainstage rehearsal or performance, or any crew call, due to any additional projects will not be accepted. All students are expected to uphold the high level of discipline and commitment that is at the core of the School of Theatre and Dance.

In addition to the policies and expectations outlined in this Theatre Arts Student Handbook, Theatre Education students are required to comply with the behavior and academic policies listed in the current *Welcome to Teacher Education* handbook. Additionally, all Theatre Education and Theatre for Youth students are required to complete at least one approved community outreach activity per semester.

BA Theatre Arts students should consult with program coordinator, Jennifer-Scott Mobley, for specific degree expectations and requirements.

## **PERFORMANCES**

The School of Theatre and Dance provides students with a plethora of opportunities to perform in a range of settings. Students are encouraged to participate fully in all aspects of their program.

### **ECU/Loessin Playhouse**

Four fully-mounted theatre productions are presented each year as part of the mainstage ECU/Loessin Playhouse series in the McGinnis Theatre and the Archie Burnette Studio Theatre. All performance concentrations are required to audition for each production.

### **ECU Storybook Theatre**

ECU Storybook Theatre performs marquee title productions in ECU's Wright Auditorium as a part of the College of Fine Arts and Communication's Arts Smart and Family Fare series, and tours to various venues throughout the eastern North Carolina region. All performance concentrations are required to audition for each production.

### **Night of Musical Theatre**

Night of Musical Theatre is a cabaret-style performance produced in the fall semester. It is open to all students, and underclassmen are strongly encouraged to participate to get both audition and performance experience.

### **Directing Projects**

Directing Projects take place each semester. These scenes are directed by students in the Directing I and II classes and range from contemporary plays to Shakespeare. While it is open to all students, underclassmen are strongly encouraged to participate to get both audition and performance experience.

### **Random Acts**

Random Acts is a revue-style show that highlights tap, jazz, and musical theatre works by faculty and students and is typically held in the spring semester.

### **Lights Up!**

Lights Up! is a student-driven performance that includes works across the full spectrum of dance and theatre and is presented at the end of spring semester. Application deadline are announced each semester. Lights Up! is an excellent opportunity for students to build on ideas from class projects or personal inspiration and to become involved with the program.

### **Faculty and Student-led Workshops**

A variety of additional faculty and student-led workshops take place every semester, including Undergraduate Research and Creative Activity Award (URCA) projects, Global Theatre performances, An Evening of Reader's Theatre, among others.

## **STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS**

The School of Theatre and Dance has many opportunities for students to become involved, develop leadership skills, pursue their interests, and support the work of SOTD. All theatre majors are encouraged to find ways to become involved with these Student Government Association (SGA) organizations that support their interests.

### **East Carolina Theatre Association**

ECTA is an organization by and for the students of SOTD who want to be a part of the theatre scene. They implement master classes, workshops, and social events in an effort to broaden their members' horizons while introducing them to contemporary practices and principles of the professional theatre.

### **Theatre for Young Audiences Dramatist Guild**

The TYA Dramatist Guild serves as an outlet for original plays written and developed for young audiences. TYA plays, both original and not, will be performed for youth and the community at large. The Guild is open to all students and is comprised of TYA playwrights, actors, directors, and designers passionate about sharing stories with the next generation. The Guild also includes the group Pirates-Upon-Avon, an SOTD ensemble that promotes the understanding of Shakespeare for children and youth and communities at large.

### **5th Street Players**

5th Street Players is designed to supplement the mainstage season and bring diversity, educational opportunities, and a professional environment to the students of ECU. They provide a professional artistic experience not only for actors, but also for design, management, and direction teams. All SOTD students are encouraged to submit ideas for their season each semester, with auditions and production team roles open to all students.

### **Pirates Upon Avon**

Pirates Upon Avon is a student-led educational Shakespeare troupe. They strive to educate audiences through their performances and workshops about William Shakespeare's works.

### **Swish**

Swish is a comedy improv troupe that meets weekly and explores a variety of improv comedy techniques, much like the show "Whose Line Is It Anyway?". Swish performs multiple times throughout the year. Note that rehearsals do not conflict with evening mainstage rehearsals or performances.

## **ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS**

### **Catalog**

The academic requirements for graduation with a BFA or BA in Theatre Arts are detailed in the ECU Undergraduate Catalog. As requirements may change each year, students should consult with their Academic Advisor to determine the specific requirements they must meet for graduation.

### **Concentrations**

Within the BFA in Theatre Arts, there are four concentration options available to students: Musical Theatre, Professional Actor Training, Theatre for Youth, and Theatre Education, in addition to the BA in Theatre Arts. When applying to the School of Theatre and Dance, students should select their intended concentration and follow the specific audition requirements.

Current students who wish to change their concentration or add a second concentration should consult with their Faculty Mentor and Academic Advisor and must request an audition from the Area Coordinator(s). Auditions for current ECU students that meet the individual academic requirements of each concentration are held in the spring for acceptance into the program the following fall semester. More detailed information on these auditions can also be found on the School of Theatre and Dance website under "Auditions."

All students admitted to the School of Theatre and Dance must have their major and concentration formally declared in Banner. See Academic Advisor Kelly Reddick for assistance.

### **Attendance and Grade Minimums**

Students missing a total of 20 percent or more of their classes in any course in the School of Theatre and Dance will automatically receive a grade of "F" in that course. Note that this is the school minimum, and individual instructors may have more stringent requirements. All students are responsible for adhering to the attendance policy listed in the syllabus for each course they take within the program.

Additionally, students must maintain a minimum grade of a C- in all required classes in their major/concentration in order to remain in the program. Any student failing to meet this requirement will be placed on probation and should consult with their Faculty Mentor and Academic Advisor.

### **Advising**

Student success in the BFA and BA Theatre Arts programs is supported by frequent, individual attention from Faculty Mentors and an Academic Advisor.

All students must meet each semester with Kelly Reddick, Advisor for the School of Theatre and Dance, for assistance with course selection and registration, including the PIN and any permissions needed for course enrollment.

In addition, each student is assigned a Faculty Mentor. Students should meet regularly with their Mentor to discuss progress in the program, professional goals, and any concerns that have arisen. Students are highly encouraged to be proactive in engaging with the faculty and school as a whole to ensure they are making the most out of their time at ECU.

### **Juries/Reviews**

To support the intensive nature of these programs and ensure all students are developing the high degree of skill expected of BFA and BA graduates, all students participate in a review process each fall and/or spring semester, as determined by each concentration. Students will be evaluated on their technical and artistic growth in their specific concentration. Faculty in each area determine a jury process appropriate to their concentration, and students will be alerted to these expectations in advance.

Students who do not successfully meet the expectations of the jury process may be given a warning and advised on areas of concern and strategies for improvement, or placed on probation and given specific, individualized criteria to meet in order to continue in the program.

Students are encouraged to see the jury process as a valuable step in their education. By preparing diligently and applying their skills under pressure, students are gaining valuable experience that will serve them in a competitive profession. Students are also encouraged to seek feedback from faculty as a valuable asset to their training that provides motivation for meeting high standards.

### **Program Completion Policy**

The curriculum for a BFA in Theatre Arts is structured such that the classes are sequential and require a four-year commitment to complete the coursework. Transfer students who are admitted directly into a concentration must take three years to complete the program. Theatre Education students should refer to the *Welcome to Teacher Education* handbook for transfer student information.

Each performance concentration has specific requirements, and students with questions about their particular program's course sequencing should consult with their Area Coordinator(s) and Academic Advisor.

BA Theatre Arts students should consult with program coordinator, Jennifer-Scott Mobley, for specific degree requirements for program completion.

## **COMMUNICATION**

### **Callboard**

All students must register for Callboard, the email listserv for the School of Theatre and Dance, using an email address that is checked regularly. Audition announcements, casting, and rehearsal and performance reports are posted here. In addition, Callboard is used for employment postings, personal requests, and lost/found notices of interest to the SOTD community. Ensure that a message does not apply to you before deleting, as you are responsible for all information shared on Callboard. Please be mindful that over 500 people, including prospective students and alumni, subscribe to Callboard postings; keep your postings brief and professional.

### **Email**

Use your @ecu.edu email for all communication with faculty and staff at ECU.

## **FACILITIES**

The Theatre Arts Programs are housed in the Messick Theatre Arts Center and shares facilities with the other programs in the School of Theatre and Dance. Messick is our home, and students are expected to treat it with respect.

### **Noise**

Please note that there is, unfortunately, no designated student lounge space in Messick. Between class and rehearsal, please be respectful of the other classes and rehearsals going on. Keep hallways clear and noise level down so as not to impede traffic or disrupt rehearsals and classes in progress.

### **Dressing Rooms**

Please keep dressing rooms neat and tidy. Remove food daily from the refrigerator. Do not store personal items in the dressing rooms unless they are secured in a locker.

### **Classrooms/Studio Spaces**

Classrooms and studio spaces are made available to students to rehearse outside of scheduled class time. Each space is equipped with rehearsal furniture and you are expected to keep the furniture in that space. If you borrow a furniture piece from another room, return it at the end of your rehearsal. Students are expected to keep spaces neat and clean by picking up after themselves and making sure they remove all personal items from the space at the end of their rehearsal. Any personal items such as props, costume pieces, bags, etc. left in the spaces will be thrown away. Please be mindful that you are sharing these spaces with many people and that using them is a privilege.

### **Building Access**

After hours, the building may be accessed by using your One Card at the card reader. Only declared Theatre and Dance majors have access, and the list is updated regularly. Do not prop the doors open, and do not open the doors for anyone not affiliated with SOTD. If you encounter problems with OneCard Access, please report this to the director of the School of Theatre and Dance, copying the Administrative Support Associate.

### **Concerns**

It is up to all of us to keep our facilities running properly. If you notice a concern, particularly in areas such as bathrooms and dressing rooms that faculty and staff may not regularly enter, please report it to the SOTD Administrative Support Associate promptly.

## **ECU STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES**

ECU's Division of Student Affairs houses a wide variety of programs and services that can benefit SOTD students. Students are encouraged to take advantage of the resources offered to support their physical, emotional and mental health, as well as their academic work. Below are a few of the offices and services that may be most useful throughout your undergraduate career.

### **Dean of Students Office** <http://www.ecu.edu/cs-studentaffairs/dos/index.cfm>

The ECU Dean of Students Office, located at 125 Umstead Hall, is the central campus resource for addressing student complaints and inquiries. Students can visit the website for the Dean of Students Office to view all ECU Policies, Rules, Regulations and Procedures, as well as other resources including ECU Cares, an online reporting service for individuals in need.

### **Office for Equity and Diversity** <http://www.ecu.edu/cs-acad/oed/>

ECU is committed to equality of opportunity and prohibits unlawful discrimination based on the following protected classes: race/ethnicity, color, genetic information, national origin, religion, sex (including pregnancy and pregnancy related conditions), sexual orientation, gender identity, age, disability, political affiliation, and veteran status ("Protected Class"). The Office for Equity and Diversity handles complaints of discrimination and harassment and provides information and resources related to Title IX.

### **Department for Disability Support Services (DSS)** <https://dss.ecu.edu/>

East Carolina University seeks to comply fully with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Students requesting accommodations based on a disability must be registered with the Department for Disability Support Services located in Slay 138 252-737-1016.

### **Center for Counseling and Student Development (CCSD)**

<http://www.ecu.edu/cs-studentaffairs/counselingcenter/>

Caring for the whole self is a critical part of the success of students in any of the Theatre Arts degree programs. The Center for Counseling and Student Development (CCSD) offers individual and group programs and outreach activities that are designed to enhance the quality of life for ECU students in the areas of cognitive, emotional, social, career, and academic development. The CCSD also includes Victim Advocacy Services.

Students who wish to make an appointment should call the CCSD at 252-328-6661 or visit their office at 137 Umstead Hall beginning Fridays at 1pm to schedule an appointment for the week immediately following. CCSD only opens new appointment slots one week at a time, with the slots opening each week on Fridays at 1pm and remaining open until filled. Students should have their Banner ID ready when calling.

Students who may be in crisis but cannot get a new appointment can go to the CCSD office Monday through Friday between 11am and 4pm to meet with a counselor for a brief crisis screening to assess your needs.

**Student Health Services** <https://studenthealth.ecu.edu/>

ECU's Student Health Services Medical Clinic is located on the Main Campus and can offer help on a wide variety of general medical issues, prescriptions and over-the-counter medication, labs, x-rays, health education and wellness, and personal safety issues.

Appointments can be made online through myPIRATEchart, by calling 252-328-6841 or by visiting their clinic Monday through Friday from 8am-5pm.

**University Writing Center** <http://www.ecu.edu/cs-acad/writing/uwc/>

The University Writing Center offers consulting services to all students, including face-to-face and online appointments as well many online resources to assist students with academic writing. These resources may be particularly useful for the Writing Intensive (WI) classes within the Writing Across the Curriculum program that are required of all students.

**Career Services** <https://career.ecu.edu/>

While theatre majors are undoubtedly on a less traditional path to securing a job upon graduation, students should be aware of ECU's Career Services department. Career Services supports and empowers students in their career development to succeed as professionals in a global community. They offer a variety of services and programs including graduate school preparation, interview preparation and practice, and job and internship search.

## **BEHAVIORAL STANDARDS**

The course of study as a theatre major is intended to prepare students for life as a professional in the performing arts industry or field of education. These standards must be followed explicitly for students to succeed in this department and in the professional world. Following the expectations listed below is considered to be the **minimum** standard for maintaining good standing in any of the BFA or BA Theatre Arts concentrations.

### **Qualities Expected of All BFA Theatre Arts Students**

- Maintains a positive and respectful attitude.
- Works hard in and outside of class to improve technical facility, academic standing and optimum health.
- Communicates in a proactive and constructive manner with faculty and other students.
- Is dedicated to and passionate about all aspects of their training.
- Brings enthusiasm and positive energy to each and every class, rehearsal, performance and crew.
- Supports other students in the program including mentoring underclasspersons.
- Volunteers to support theatre program activities and events, including auditions, visits by prospective students, and guest artist residencies.
- Possesses and utilizes the level of maturity required to meet the emotional and physical demands of all theatre activities.

### **Personal Health and Wellness**

The actor's instrument is the body. Part of learning the craft includes working diligently on voice and physicality so that every tool is available for characterization. Good vocal and physical health are a priority as classes, rehearsals, and performances are rigorous and require stamina. The following protocols are encouraged not just for your time at ECU but throughout your career as a performer:

- Thorough warm-ups and cool-downs before and after rehearsals and performances.
- Work for a consistent sleep schedule that allows you to rest and recover.
- Eat healthy meals that are rich in protein and vitamins for energy and don't skip meals.
- Drink plenty of water.

- Take proper care to prevent colds (consistent hand washing before meals, before touching your face, after contact with anyone who is sick). Precautionary measures such as flu shots are recommended but not required.
- If you become sick take measures to prevent spreading germs (face masks, avoid contact with others).

Students should strive to find the optimum state of health for them personally. Fad diets, excessive workouts, skipping meals, and other unhealthy practices weaken your instrument and lead to injury.

## CLASS PREPARATION AND CONDUCT

Taking class is both a privilege and an opportunity that deserves your respect and preparation. To be a professional performer, educator or any theatre professional you must treat teachers and your peers with a positive, supportive and respectful attitude. You also need to cultivate the ability to be open to criticism and to take direction. Following the expectations below is considered the **minimum** standard for maintaining good standing in any of the BFA or BA Theatre Arts concentrations. You will be expected to approach all university classes, not just those within SOTD, with this level of attention.

### General Conduct

- You are expected to listen to the instructor at all times, whether they are demonstrating, giving notes, or answering questions from other students.
- Cell phones are prohibited in classes unless otherwise noted by your instructor.
- You should be in your seat (or warmed up) ready to go the moment class begins.
- You are expected to aim for the highest standards in both academic and practice-based classes. A grade of C- or below is not considered passing for the major.
- Additionally, you are expected to maintain your grades and adhere to attendance policies in all of your classes while participating in mainstage productions as cast, design or crew. **Your mainstage participation is not an excuse for poor attendance or poor grades.** Instructors reserve the right to prohibit students from participating in production(s) if they are performing poorly in their classes.
- Never leave a practice-based or academic class without permission from the instructor or during someone's performance.
- If you have any questions about the material being presented, you are expected to ask them in a timely manner.
- Your instructors are available during office hours for more in-depth guidance on your training. It is your responsibility to proactively engage your instructors to get the most out of your training and education.

### Homework Assignments and Projects

- You are expected to do all homework prior to the next class (or the due date indicated on the assignment per the syllabus or instructor notification).
- In technique classes, you are expected to not only remember, but to improve upon your performance of all material for the next class.
- In academic classes, you are expected to be prepared with your homework and any assigned reading at every class.

- In academic classes, you are expected to demonstrate your preparedness by actively participating in class discussion on a regular, if not daily, basis.

### **Academic Integrity**

All students are expected to conduct themselves with honesty and integrity in their work. Simply put, cheating and dishonesty of any kind is not tolerated; this includes plagiarizing, cheating on tests, as well as facilitating the academic dishonesty of others.

Violations of the ECU Academic Integrity Policy will be reported to the University. Violations that occur within the context of a course in a Theatre Arts concentration will be subject to the policies outlined in the syllabus for that course. In addition, majors in the theatre program will also receive a notice of Unprofessional Conduct for any violation of the ECU Academic Integrity policy within or outside of the major.

The full text for ECU's Academic Integrity Policy, along with all ECU Policies, Rules, Regulations and Procedures, can be found on the website for the Dean of Students: [http://www.ecu.edu/cs-studentaffairs/dos/rules\\_policies.cfm](http://www.ecu.edu/cs-studentaffairs/dos/rules_policies.cfm)

## **REHEARSAL PREPARATION AND CONDUCT**

It is both a privilege and an honor to be cast in any SOTD approved production (Mainstage, Storybook, faculty/student-led projects, 5<sup>th</sup> Street Players, Directing Projects, etc.). All cast members are expected to maintain the highest professional attitude and conduct at all times during the rehearsal process.

### **Rehearsal Preparation**

- Arrive 15-30 minutes before the start time of all rehearsals to warm-up and prepare for the work being done in that rehearsal (i.e. vocal warm-ups, stretching/physical warm-ups, running lines, reviewing blocking/choreography, etc.). We find that the most successful students are the ones who give themselves a full 30 minutes for this process. **Remember in the theatre being early is on time, being on time is late, and late is unacceptable.**
- Your body and voice are your instruments so please make sure to take care of them, including cooling down both your voice and your body after rehearsals. Rehearsals are rigorous and physical stamina is required. Make sure you are practicing good habits to take care of your health. If there is any reason that your ability to act, sing, dance, or complete the necessary tasks may be impaired during rehearsal, you must inform the director and stage manager immediately before rehearsal begins.
- You are expected to wear the appropriate attire for rehearsals. Attire will be show-specific, and you should consult your director on what you should wear. Appendix A at the end of this document provides a detailed list of all wardrobe pieces and makeup items required of all actors.
- The production department may provide you with some specialty pieces such as corsets, full-length skirts, hats, coats, shoes, etc. Once you are given those items, you are expected to wear them for all rehearsals unless instructed otherwise. Please make sure you take care of those items and put them away properly after each rehearsal. If the piece is damaged during rehearsal, report it to stage management immediately.
- You are required to have a copy of the script and/or music libretto, a notebook, and pencil for all rehearsals. For music rehearsals, you are required to have a recording device. You are responsible for writing down all blocking and notes given by the production team.
- You are required to get permission from the director to make any changes to your appearance (i.e. haircuts/coloring, body piercings, etc.). By accepting this role, you accept the design of the character's overall appearance which may require you to change yours, including but not limited to: hair style, hair color, facial hair, wigs, hair extensions or other. Any cosmetic changes due to design, beyond basic grooming and upkeep, are the financial responsibility of ECU School of Theatre and Dance but must be done with the consultation of the costume shop prior to changes.

## **Expected Conduct and Behavior**

- Never leave a rehearsal without permission from the director or stage manager. You will be given breaks throughout rehearsal. Stay in the room during rehearsals until the director or production team releases you.
- No food or drink (except covered water bottles) may be consumed in any of the rehearsal spaces. If you bring food for rehearsal breaks, please keep it in your bag and eat it outside of the rehearsal hall.
- Stay focused on the material you are rehearsing. If you are given down time you may use that to work on other class or production work but always be prepared to jump back in to rehearsal when needed.
- There should be no excessive talking or disruptive activity of any kind during rehearsal. When people are working, you are quiet.
- Line memorization expectations will be given to you by your individual directors. However, a good general rule is that lines should be memorized after blocking the scene for the first time. You should be off book when the director returns to work on that scene.
- All cell phones must be silenced and put away during all rehearsals unless being used as recording devices with approval by individual directors. Otherwise they may be used on breaks but must be put away when you are called back.
- No photos or videos may be taken of any rehearsal without the permission of the director and all performers involved. Any pictures or videos allowed to be taken may not be posted to any social media platform without the permission of the director. SOTD is working to curate a social media presence and you are encouraged to share and repost that content.
- It is every actor's responsibility to keep rehearsal spaces neat and organized. This includes taking care and respecting all props, furniture, and costume pieces.
- Alcohol or non-prescription drugs, or being under the influence of alcohol or non-prescription drugs, are strictly prohibited.

## **Notes and Questions**

- All questions or changes in aspects of performance must go through the director (and choreographer or music director, when appropriate).
- All notes and corrections should be made by the director or appropriate production team member. Actors should not give each other notes or comments. If you notice an issue in the performance of other actors and it is impeding you, bring it to the attention of the director privately and let them handle it.
- It is your responsibility to take all notes given to you by the director and production team. **The proper response to a note is "thank you," then writing it down to**

**implement for the next rehearsal.** If you have questions or need clarification, please direct them to the appropriate production team member in a respectful and kind manner.

- All notes and/or corrections should be worked out by all involved actors before the next rehearsal. If time is needed outside of scheduled rehearsals, it is the responsibility of all actors involved to find the time and space to work on the material in a professional and supportive way. If questions arise during this process, bring them to the attention of the director.
- If additional questions, concerns or issues arise that you are unsure how to handle, please bring them to the attention of the stage manager and/or director so that they may assist you.

### **Technical Rehearsal Conduct**

- Tech rehearsals are about the process of adding all technical elements of the production, not about you the actor.
- When asked to hold, stay in your exact position and do not begin side conversations.
- Do not exit the area directly after a scene. You must wait until you are sure the production team is moving forward.
- Always maintain a positive and supportive relationship with all technical crew members, the stage manager, and the assistant stage managers.
- Always maintain a positive and supportive relationship with all major designers for the show you are rehearsing.
- Issues or questions about costume design and fit (e.g. restriction of movement) should be brought to the attention of your Director or Costume Designer and not commented on in other contexts.
- Respect for all props, costumes, and set pieces is imperative. Never touch a prop, costume, or set piece that you have not been instructed to use.
- Cell phones are prohibited backstage during technical rehearsals. You should be focused on your work.
- No photos or videos of the rehearsal or rehearsal elements (costumes, props, set pieces etc.) may be shared without the express permission of the Director or Production Staff.

### **Stage Intimacy Protocols**

The ECU SOTD strives to create work that is dynamic, transformative, and challenging; work that expresses the full range of human experiences. Such work requires bravery and vulnerability from actors. We are committed to creating a safe, consensual, autonomous environment that supports artists to do their best work. The following protocols must be respected when working on scenes for class including for outside rehearsals:

- Scenes must be rehearsed in the theatre building or public space on campus with unlocked doors. (No rehearsing in dorm rooms or apartments.)
- Whenever possible, rehearse with a third party present.
- Students are expected to communicate their boundaries prior to working on a scene and thoroughly discuss any physical contact before it takes place.
- Students should check-in with each other before each rehearsal to ensure that boundaries have not changed. Performers have the right to withdraw consent at any time.
- Students are expected to ask for and receive consent from their partner before making contact. Consent is always reversible.
- Once blocking/choreography has been established it should not be deviated from without a conversation. Surprising your scene partner is disrespectful and unprofessional.
- Scenes of intimacy should be "marked" or a place holder for the intimacy used, for outside of class rehearsal if no third party is present.

### **Stage Violence and Weapon Safety**

Scenes that require physical violence and/or prop weapons (knives, guns, swords, bats, etc.) are specialized and require specific choreography and protocols. Prop firearms and weapons must be approved and stored accordingly. Make no assumptions with regard to a prop's safety. Placing tape over a real knife does not render it safe. A prop gun that cannot fire but looks real puts you in *real* danger if you carry it around campus. All weapons, real or not, are dangerous. If your scene includes violence, it is your responsibility to seek help in getting it choreographed safely. The following protocol must be followed when working with prop weapons:

- Have the prop approved by your instructor. (It is preferable, especially in the case of a firearm, that it be *clearly* fake, such as a Nerf gun in bright colors.)

- Prop firearms should never be pointed directly at anyone in the scene or the audience.
  - Do not place your finger on the trigger, lay it along the barrel of the prop firearm. (This practice establishes good habits and muscle memory, should you ever be called upon to use a theatrical blank-firing firearm on stage.)
  - Always store the prop weapon in a secure, locked location. Inform your instructor if you do not have a secure place to store the prop weapon.
  - Under no circumstances should you surprise your scene partner, the class, or the instructor with a prop weapon that has not been approved.
  - Real knives (unless they are blunt silverware) are *not* allowed, even if they are not being used in a fight.
  - Under no circumstances is it acceptable to bring a real firearm to campus.
- ECU's University Regulation Concerning Weapons may be referenced for more detail: <http://www.ecu.edu/PRR/05/20/07>

**TEDI BEAR Training** <http://www.ecu.edu/cs-dhs/tedibear/>

All Theatre Education and Theatre for Youth students, as well as any student interacting with children on campus, must complete TEDI BEAR Stewards of Children Training.

**Dismissal**

Every director, with the consultation of the Director of the School of Theatre and Dance, has the right to dismiss/cut an actor from their production at any time for any reason they deem appropriate.

## **PERFORMANCE PREPARATION AND CONDUCT**

Performing is a great responsibility that requires the utmost in professional conduct. It is an honor to be cast in any SOTD approved performance (Mainstage, Storybook, faculty/student-led projects, 5<sup>th</sup> Street Players, Directing Projects, etc.) Any student that does not follow the guidelines listed in this document may be placed on probation.

### **Eligibility**

Theatre majors must complete the following requirements to be eligible for casting in SOTD sponsored performances:

- A minimum GPA of 2.0

### **Auditions**

All performance BFAs (Musical Theatre, Professional Acting and Theatre for Youth) and pre-accepted and/or provisionally accepted freshmen are required to attend all Mainstage and Storybook auditions. BFA Theatre Education students should consult your Area Coordinator for audition requirements.

Prior to each audition, students must complete a conflict sheet and turn it in to the Stage Manager. The conflict sheet must list all conflicts during the rehearsal period. Conflicts not listed on the sheet will not be excused; this may result in a Notice of Unprofessional Conduct if rehearsals are missed. SOTD students are strongly encouraged NOT to register for evening classes that conflict with rehearsal times. Conflicts will likely result in students not being cast.

Auditions are a lifelong practice for actors, directors and theatre educators. Each production is unique in required skills, genre, style, venue, concept and approach. It is recommended students focus on what they can control of the audition process through appropriate preparation, earning the trust of peers/directors in the classroom setting, and honing performance skills. Below are some basic practices that work for all auditions including those in the SoTD.

- Read each casting notice thoroughly and follow ALL instructions on it.
- Read/listen the full script/score if provided. This is imperative for full preparation.
- Look up the pronunciation/definition of any title, proper name, word, or allusion you do not have a full understanding of and will be speaking.
- Thoroughly analyze the audition material and make active choices that are rooted in the text and circumstances of the story. Spend time working on this well before the audition day. Preparation = a confident audition.

- Dress professionally and appropriately for the audition. Make sure you bring appropriate attire and shoes for dance/movement auditions.
- Be early! Show up 30 minutes before your scheduled audition to vocally and physically warm-up. This is not a time to socialize...it is time to prepare to do your work.
- Be courteous, respectful and kind in all your interactions with the production team and you fellow actors.
- Be flexible and ready to take a note/adjustment you are given in the audition.

Each student is responsible for and should assume ownership of strengthening their audition skills. Several acting faculty teach units in their classes which address audition preparation. Students should review this material as part of their pedagogical development in preparation for all auditions. Faculty directors are available to answer your questions and provide individual feedback for your audition. Below are some faculty recommended texts on auditioning that you might find useful:

*“Audition: Everything an Actor Needs to Know to Get the Part”* by Michael Shurtleff

*“Auditioning: An Actor-Friendly Guide”* by Joanna Merlin

*“Loving to Audition”* by Larry Silverberg

### **Casting**

The School of the Theatre and Dance uses ability, maturity, professionalism, and suitedness to training for production casting. Casting considers all of these in addition to given circumstances laid out by the playwright. Body type, ethnicity, and sexual orientation are not taken into consideration for casting unless specifically addressed in the given circumstances of the play or musical.

- All decisions on casting will be made by the director and will be based on what is best for that particular play or musical.
- Expectations of role requirements will be made clear prior to auditions. Once cast, you are obligated to fulfill all rehearsal and performance requirements. Any concerns or reservations should be presented to the director prior to auditions.
- Mainstage productions take precedence over any other SOTD approved productions.
- Your work in your major courses, including attendance, has a direct impact on casting.

- Note: You are not entitled to any particular part, regardless of your performance in particular classes, classification (senior, junior, etc.) or personal dedication to any specific idiom or style of training.

### **Performance Conduct and Duties**

- Pre-show warm-ups are mandatory for all performers.
- All performers should be sure to cool down their voices and bodies after performances to maintain optimum vocal and physical health.
- No photos or videos of the performance or performance elements (costumes, props, set pieces etc.) may be shared without the express permission of the Director or Production Staff.
- No cell phones are allowed.
- Alcohol or non-prescription drugs, or being under the influence of alcohol or non-prescription drugs, is strictly prohibited.
- Once the show has opened, it is frozen. Actors under the supervision of the Stage Management Team must adhere to all staging and acting choices. Deviation from this will result in a verbal reminder from the Stage Manager. If the deviation continues, students may be issued a Notice of Unprofessional Conduct and subject to probation.
- All performers are required to help with strike at the discretion of the Technical Director. Performers may only leave strike after they check out with the Stage Manager.

## **UNPROFESSIONAL CONDUCT**

Part of your training here will consist of learning professional behavior, which includes attendance, work ethic, following rehearsal and performance protocols, as well as your ability to engage in a positive and professional manner with fellow classmates, faculty members, directors, and crew members. We recognize that, as with other aspects of training, there is a learning curve involved with integrating professional and standard academic behavior. Therefore, we will not hesitate to inform you of behavior that will not serve you well for success in either your academic or professional career.

Failure to follow the standards and codes of conduct listed in this document (and in specific course syllabi) is considered Unprofessional Conduct and constitutes grounds for being placed on probation and, ultimately, dismissal from the program. Additionally, not adhering to the rules of the class or syllabus of any course within your BFA or BA concentration can result in immediate dismissal from your BFA program.

Students engaging in unprofessional conduct will receive a verbal warning and/or written notice from faculty to allow for appropriate changes in behavior by the student. All performance faculty will be notified of any and all warnings received by a student.

Repeated disregard of professional behavior as outlined in this document will result in your being placed on probation. Your concentration coordinator will provide specific information on the probation and improvement process for your area. If the unprofessional behavior is not addressed and changed, it will result in disciplinary measures and/or dismissal from your BFA or BA program.

NOTE: This Student Handbook represents a written agreement between you, the student, and the School of Theatre and Dance. It is also a living document, and as such may be subject to changes deemed necessary to comply with SOTD and ECU policies. Students will be alerted to any changes in order to adhere fully to the contents of this document.

## APPENDIX A: ACTOR WARDROBE AND MAKEUP REQUIREMENTS

The following is a list compiled by the School of Theatre and Dance Costume Shop outlining costume pieces and makeup items required of all actors for rehearsal and performance purposes. Although you may audition for and be cast in plays from time periods in which the binary gender model was the norm, please feel free to share with faculty your identification and/or pronouns so they are aware of roles you feel most inclined toward, or how the binary gender model can be adapted into a more fluid performative context. Using the historical binary gender model as a starting point, however, you will need the following clothing items (or a combination thereof) as part of your participation in the program:

### Women and Men

- Ballet slippers: pink for women, black for men (soft soled jazz shoes also work, tan or black)
- Black jazz or yoga pants (leggings also acceptable for women)
- White button-down shirt
- Kneepads, preferably the slim ones (should reserve for show use only)
- Makeup Kits. The Ben Nye Theatrical Crème Pro Kit is used in the makeup class. The cost is about \$60 to \$80 depending on where it is purchased, but with proper care it will be used all four years in school and after graduation.

### Women

- AT LEAST 2 ½ inch character heels or higher, no shorter. T-strap preferred, tan preferred (the costume shop is happy to paint shoes to actor's proper nude).
- Full skirt, at least knee length, and a mini skirt as well
- Tan and black bra top and biker/"booty" shorts
- Strapless/Multi strap bra, tan and black
- Leotard, simple black
- Students in the Professional Actor Training concentration should have a corset after the Styles course has been taken

### Men

- Dress pants, light and dark color
- Suit coat and vest. A full three-piece suit is ideal, but not necessary as they can be very expensive. (These items are for rehearsal, so can be purchased second hand at thrift shops.)
- Dance Belt: The costume shop does not provide these as they are such a personal item. In dance classes or auditions requiring tight-fitting pants or jazz pants, dance belts **must** be worn. In shows with dance or stage combat sequences, men should wear a dance belt or a compression-style sport brief.
- Hard sole dress shoes: with laces is preferred, but loafers can work if the movement of the show allows.
- Hat, fedora size brim preferred